Advertisement

LONG & FOSTER REAL ESTATE

CHRISTIE'S INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

LONG & FOSTER

Buying or selling? Trust the Market Leader.

Find your agent at **LongandFoster.com**

Mortgage | Settlement Services | Insurance | Property Management | Vacation Rentals | Relocation | New Home Sales and Marketing

THE BALTIMORE SUN

LIGHT FOR ALL

baltimoresun.com

Informing more than 1 million Maryland readers weekly in print and online

Price $2. Our 180th year, No. 350

SATURDAY

December 16, 2017

An inconvenient snowfall

KARL MERTON FERRON/BALTIMORE SUN

Wearing a Santa hat, bariatric/sports medicine coordinator Lisa Ziegler scrapes off snow from her car for her commute to Bel Air. Friday afternoon's snowfall disrupted schools and made driving tricky. **ARTICLE, NEWS PG 2**

GOP tax bill moves ahead

Leaders expect favorable votes in House and Senate

By John Fritze
The Baltimore Sun

WASHINGTON — Congressional Republicans were on the verge of approving the first major overhaul of the nation's tax laws in three decades as negotiators locked down the final version of the bill Friday and two key Senate holdouts announced that they would support the measure.

Jubilant GOP leaders said they expect to vote on the $1.5 trillion legislation in the coming days and deliver it to President Donald J. Trump by the end of next week, handing the White House its first significant legislative victory.

While independent analysts predict that most Marylanders would receive a tax break under the bill, the proposal has drawn sharp criticism from Democrats for providing more generous breaks to corporations and the wealthy than to middle-class families.

If approved, the legislation may prompt a debate in Annapolis next year over the state's tax laws. For income taxes, the measure would lower individual rates for most people and nearly double the standard deduction — to $24,000 for a married couple. But it would also limit popular deductions such as those for mortgage interest and state and local taxes, a provision claimed by a higher share of

See **TAXES,** *page 12*

White expands the audit of school board contracts

Purchases from 3 additional years will now be included

By Liz Bowie
The Baltimore Sun

Baltimore County interim school superintendent Verletta White has significantly expanded the scope of a planned audit of school system purchases.

The audit, for which the school system

SUN INVESTIGATES

is soliciting bids from accounting firms, will now encompass hundreds of millions of dollars in purchases made between 2014 and 2017 rather than just 2016, and it will include a specific focus on technology contracts.

White said she expanded the audit's scope at the suggestion of state officials. She made the change on Dec. 8, a few days after parents and four county school board members, representing a minority on the 12-member board, asked the state to intervene and conduct an independent, forensic audit.

The Baltimore Sun reported this fall that school system administrators, including White and former Superintendent Dallas Dance, worked for several years as paid consultants for a company that represents education technology firms.

See **AUDIT,** *page 12*

Police arrest driver after chase through the city

Girlfriend steps in, pulling him from car for police

By Tim Prudente
The Baltimore Sun

A gunman in a Lexus sped through traffic while spraying bullets at police and passersby during a chase that stretched through West Baltimore for nearly half an hour Friday.

By noon, his girlfriend had enough.

When he stopped the car and opened the door, she rushed into the street, bear-hugged the gunman and dragged him out, said Chief T.J. Smith, the Baltimore police spokesman. She pinned her boyfriend down as the Lexus rolled away and officers rushed up.

Her intervention brought a peaceful end to a violent run that left two civilians shot and wounded. One officer was struck by the Lexus and hurt during the arrest. The chaos was broadcast live by TV news crews.

"It's absolutely insane. Absolutely crazy. What possessed this guy to do this? I have no idea," Police Commissioner Kevin Davis said. "This could have been much, much worse."

See **CHASE,** *page 12*

SUMMARY OF THE NEWS

MARYLAND

CIVILIAN REVIEW: A panel of local residents assigned to oversee civilian oversight of Baltimore's Police Department has fallen behind schedule and plans to seek more time to compile its recommendations. **NEWS PG 2**

NATION

TRUMP AND THE FBI: Ahead of a graduation ceremony at the FBI academy, President Donald Trump stepped up attacks on what he sees as bias and an unfair investigation into Russian meddling in the 2016 election. **NEWS PG 11**

TODAY'S WEATHER

PARTLY CLOUDY

46 HIGH | **28** LOW

Partly sunny Sunday **SPORTS PG 10**

COMING THIS WEEKEND

GIFT GUIDE

A special section with last-minute gift ideas for almost anyone on your list offered by BestReviews.com. Some subscribers will receive this section with Saturday delivery of advance Sunday sections.

Victims remembered as close-knit family

'Those girls just loved her,' pastor says after fire kills mother, daughters

By Talia Richman
The Baltimore Sun

Alicia Evans loved animals, Taco Bell and nature, often taking long hikes away from the city lights and rumbling cars.

But most of all, said a lifelong friend, Evans loved her girls.

Evans and her two young daughters — 4-year-old Layla Mullen and 5-year-old Amani Mullen — died after sustaining injuries in a house fire earlier this week.

"Those girls just loved her," said pastor Rodney Middleton, who knew the family for more than a decade. "They clinged to her all the time."

Firefighters were called around 1 a.m. Wednesday to the fire in the 700 block of E. Cold Spring Lane in the Richnor Springs neighborhood, department spokeswoman Blair Skinner said. They found heavy smoke and fire coming from the first and second floors of the North Baltimore rowhome.

The cause of the fire is still under investigation.

The State Medical Examiner's Office determined that the cause of death was thermal injuries and smoke inhalation,

RODNEY MIDDLETON/HANDOUT

Alicia Evans and her two daughters, Layla Mullen, 4, and Amani Mullen, 5, died of injuries sustained in a Wednesday morning fire in the Richnor Springs neighborhood.

Skinner said.

"Our heartfelt thoughts and prayers continue to go out to the family during this difficult time," said Fire Chief Niles R. Ford.

Baltimore has seen 28 fire-related deaths this year, the most in at least the past five years. The city had 16 fire deaths in

See **FIRE,** *page 11*

inside

bridge **sports 7** • lottery **news 4** • business **news 7** • obituaries **news 10** • opinion **news 13**
puzzles **sports 7, 9** • horoscopes **news 9** • tonight on tv **sports 9** • comics **sports 8**